

Louise believes that protecting our environment is crucial. The League of Conservation Voters (LCV) gave Louise 100 percent on their 2009 scorecard and Environment America listed Louise as one of its “Congressional Environmental Champions” in 2009 for voting with the environment on every key vote that year.

Louise believes that the U.S. cannot wait any longer to address global warming. That is why she was proud to vote for H.R. 2454, the American Clean Energy and Security Act of 2009 (ACES). By investing \$190 billion in clean, renewable energy and energy efficiency, ACES would boost our economic security and national security while protecting our environment and saving Americans money.

Louise is proud to co-chair the bipartisan Great Lakes Task Force. The Task Force advocates for policies and programs that restore and clean up the Great Lakes. Louise has been a tireless advocate for the Great Lakes, fighting for investment not only in restoration and cleanup but also in combating invasive species – most recently Asian carp. She is an original co-sponsor of H.R. 4755, the Great Lakes Ecosystem Protection Act (S. 3073). This bill authorizes the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI), a comprehensive multi-billion dollar, multi-year plan for the Great Lakes begun during the Obama Administration. The bill would also reauthorize the Great Lakes Legacy program, increasing its authorized funding to \$150 million/year, and reauthorize the Great Lakes National Program Office.

Louise has also been outspoken in trying to prevent the next big oil spill. In the wake of the disaster with the BP Deepwater Horizon drilling platform, Louise led her colleagues in demanding that the Department of Interior and Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Regulation and Enforcement take immediate action to address serious allegations raised by a BP consultant-turned-whistleblower concerning the safety of the BP Atlantis platform. In light of the whistleblower’s allegations, the BP Atlantis has been widely warned of as the next possible Deepwater Horizon. On July 21, 2010, Louise led a letter with 17 of her colleagues to Secretary Ken Salazar and Bureau of Ocean Energy Management Director Michael Bromwich expressing concern about the pace at which the Department of the Interior has acted on tips provided by the whistleblower, Ken Abbott. The letter further urged the Department to immediately order a halt to operations at the Atlantis platform pending an investigation, to immediately interview Mr. Abbott (a step the Department had not yet taken, amazingly), and to conduct a check of the specific deficiencies alleged by the whistleblower (which the Department had also not yet appeared to have done).

As Chair of the House Rules Committee, Louise has ushered through the House a number of important bills relating to energy and the environment. Along with H.R. 2454, the American Clean Energy and Security Act, a comprehensive climate change and energy bill, Louise has helped push through bills dealing with oil drilling and public lands. On July 30, 2010, Louise ushered through the Rules Committee H.R. 3534, the Consolidated Land, Energy, and Aquatic Resources (CLEAR) Act. The bill passed the House by a vote of 209 to 193. The CLEAR Act provides new safety standards for offshore drilling, abolishes the Minerals Management Service and establishing in its place an agency structured to avoid the conflict of interest that helped keep MMS from doing its job, and closes royalty loopholes, including those that allow companies to pay zero royalties during times of high oil prices.

Along with the CLEAR Act, the Rules Committee advanced H.R. 5851, the Offshore Oil and Gas Worker Whistleblower Protection Act. The bill passed the House by a vote of 315 to 93. The legislation prohibits an employer from discharging or otherwise discriminating against employees who report violations of the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act (OCSLA) and provides whistleblowers and workers who refuse to engage in unsafe activities a number of other protections. The Rules Committee also ensured that the House reached an agreement with the Senate on H.R. 146, the Omnibus Public Land Management Act, perhaps the most significant conservation measure to be enacted by Congress in the last 15 years. This package of more than 160 individual public lands bills permanently codified the National Landscape Conservation System; created two million new acres of wilderness across nine states; established three new national park units; designated 1,000 miles of wild and scenic rivers; designated a National Monument and three National Conservation Areas; protected world-class hunting land in the Wyoming Range; and recognized new Historic Sites and Heritage Areas. The final version of the bill passed the House 285 to 140 on March 25, 2009 and President Obama signed it into law on March 30, 2009.

Louise is a cosponsor of H.R. 2766, the Fracturing Responsibility and Awareness of Chemicals (FRAC) Act of 2009. The FRAC Act would repeal the Bush-era exemptions from restrictions on underground injection of fluids near drinking water sources granted to hydraulic fracturing operations and require oil and gas companies to disclose the chemicals used in hydraulic fracturing operations. Louise feels that hydraulic fracturing – such as the drilling in our region over the Marcellus Shale – needs to be put on hold until there is further study of the health and environmental effects of the chemicals it puts into the ground and into our drinking water.